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SUBJECT: MOZAMBIQUE OPPOSITION THREATS NOT CREDIBLE

Classified By: Acting POL/ECON Chief Eric Heyden, Reasons 1.4(b+d)

¶1. (C) RENAMO opposition leader and defeated presidential candidate Afonso Dhlakama has denounced as fraudulent the recent overwhelming victory by FRELIMO,s Armando Guebuza, often in an inflammatory fashion. But few take his comments seriously. Dhlakama was first quoted as saying that RENAMO would set the country on fire in response to the fraudulent elections. He later explained that what he intended to say was the people, not RENAMO, would react in fiery anger. Local press poked fun at Dhlakama, pointing out that he was seen shopping for furniture to decorate his new home in the northern city of Nampula, scarcely the behavior of a committed revolutionary. Mozambique,s recent soccer victory over Tunisia, qualifying it for the African championship in Angola, has occasioned more excitement in the press and among Mozambicans than the RENAMO leader,s comments.

¶2. (C) Contacted by telephone, RENAMO spokesperson Maria Ivone Soares confirmed that the party had submitted a 500-page formal complaint to the National Electoral Commission (CNE) seeking to overturn the results, which, as required by law, the CNE had forwarded with its opinion to the Constitutional Council, effectively Mozambique,s Supreme Court. The normally ebullient Soares sounded tired, giving the impression that she was merely appeasing her superiors by drafting and submitting the complaint, and confiding she had little hope that the challenge would succeed.  
CHAPMAN